

**EPA Public Meeting:**

Mary Larcinese, Mayor  
Borough Of Jefferson Hills  
925 Old Clairton Road  
Jefferson Hills, PA 15025

April 23, 2003

Jefferson Hills is a community with a population of roughly 12,000 located in Allegheny County and home to the Elrama Power Plant owned and operated by Reliant Energy. Our community is also home to Fern Valley, Elrama power plants waste disposal landfill.

As residents of Western Pennsylvania, we are all accustomed to living with industry. We welcome industry and its workforce. Many area facilities employ our residents. I believed there was a bond of trust between industry and the community. However, I am now beginning to question whether that trust has been compromised.

I am concerned that our health is not being protected.

This last summer I learned that more Pennsylvanians are dying prematurely from air pollution and that fine particulates are most damaging to lung tissue. I was alarmed to read that our state, Pennsylvania, ranks #2 in the nation for bad air.

I also learned that the EPA would soon require new standards on fine particulates released into the air by power plants. Of greatest concern to me was the fact that eight counties in Pennsylvania are not expected to meet these new standards. Included in that list were Allegheny, Washington and Westmoreland counties.

If these counties are not expected to comply to the new EPA air quality numbers, how can they be permitted to continue to release pollutants from their stacks? As an environmental agency, shouldn't you be limiting the emissions from plants like Elrama, especially when they are in violation of existing laws? Do you honestly believe you are doing enough to protect human life? Plants are being allowed to increase their pollution when our area is expected to have trouble reaching new air pollution requirements.

Over the last 20 years the Automobile Industry were required to put catalytic converters on automobiles to help the air pollution. Their lobbyist cried that it would put them out of business. Well, the catalytic converters are on our cars today and the Automobile Industry is still growing. Our small businesses were also forced to come into compliance and deal with the recycling of oil, tires and catalytic converters. Why does the Power Plant Industry keep getting extra years to clean up? Why does one industry the "Power Industry" get a break year after year after year? And, at our expense!

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Mary Larcinese

I ask that you look beyond the numbers and documents you deal with everyday: there are human lives at stake.

I come before you this evening on behalf of my family, my constituents of Jefferson Hills I have sworn to protect, as well as my out of state family and friends, who will also be negatively impacted by dangerous air pollution from power plants like Elrama.

I ask that you limit what power plants can discharge into our environment and stop letting the Power Industry receive extra time year after year to clean up.

I ask you to consider all the comments made here, this evening. After all, this is the first time that we have had a chance to be heard.

And, I challenge your agency, as well as state and federal lawmakers, to ways to balance human health with industry. As I stated earlier, we welcome industry. However, we seek a fair and safe balance.

Thank you,

Mary Larcinese  
Mayor  
Borough Of Jefferson Hills